

PRESS RELEASE

August 2, 2006

RE: UNITED STATES v. FREELY, et al.

United States Attorney Terrance P. Flynn today announced that **Edward Freely, Sr.**, (age 63), **Chnell Benjamin** (age 25), **Kimberlin Lester-Benjamin** (age 43), **Shannon Wright** (age 20), **Lorraine Wright** (age 43), **Deidre Buckingham** (age 44) -- all of Buffalo, New York, entered pleas of guilty before the Hon. John T. Elfvin, United States District Court Judge, to charges of violating the federal Wire Fraud Statute, in violation of 18 U.S.C. Section 1343. Each defendant faces a maximum term of imprisonment of twenty years in jail and/or a fine of \$250,000. **Chnell Benjamin** will be sentenced on November 24, 2006 at 1:00 PM; **Deidre Buckingham, Edward Freely Sr., Kimberlin Lester-Benjamin, Shannon Wright**, and **Lorraine Wright** will be sentenced on December 1, 2006 at 1:00 PM.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Martin J. Littlefield stated that the charges arise from a scheme to defraud the United States Postal Service through a check kiting scheme using closed checking accounts and/or accounts for which there was no money in order to purchase various large quantities of Postal Service products for resale "on the streets." Over a three month period, the defendants defrauded the government in excess of \$35,000.

The investigation and resultant pleas of guilty were the result of a month long

investigation by the United States Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Ronald C. Walker, Inspector In Charge, New York Division.